

## TRADE UNION STATISTICS, AUSTRALIA 30 JUNE 1992

### MAIN FEATURES

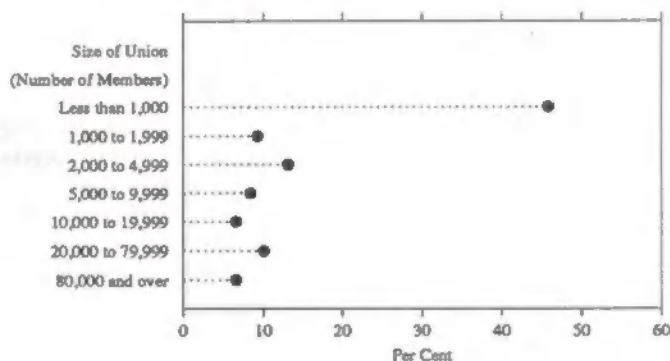
At 30 June 1992 there were 227 trade unions with a total membership of 3,135,100. In comparison, at 30 June 1991 there were 275 unions and 3,382,600 members. The number of trade unions decreased by 48 (17%) and there was a decrease in total membership of 247,500, or 7.3 per cent.

The reduction in the number of unions was largely the result of amalgamations. In the year to 30 June 1992, 68 unions amalgamated to form 24 unions. These amalgamations also resulted in a sharp decrease in the number of unions operating in each State. Victoria had the largest decrease, from 146 in 1991 to 114 in 1992.

There were 134 unions, with 466,100 members, operating in only one State or Territory. There were 63 unions, with 2,447,900 members, operating in six or more States/Territories.

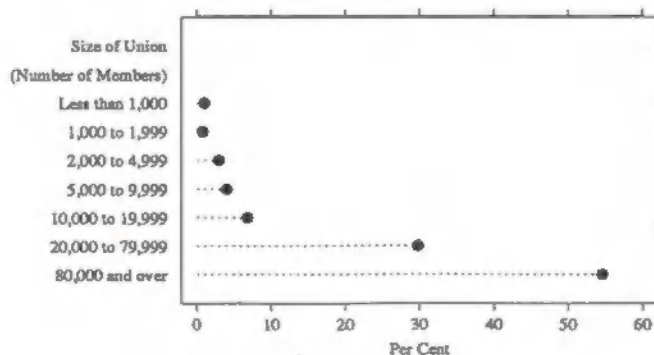
Unions with fewer than 2,000 members were most affected by amalgamations. In 1991 there were 155 of these, accounting for 2.4 per cent of total union membership. In 1992 the number of unions in this size category had decreased by 30 to 125 and they represented 1.9 per cent of total membership.

DISTRIBUTION OF TRADE UNIONS BY SIZE OF UNION,  
AUSTRALIA, 30 JUNE 1992



Source: Table 5

DISTRIBUTION OF TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP BY SIZE OF UNION,  
AUSTRALIA, 30 JUNE 1992



Source: Table 6

### INQUIRIES

- for further information about statistics in this publication and the availability of related unpublished statistics contact Brenda McMorow on Canberra (06) 252 6561 or any ABS State office.
- for information about other ABS statistics and services please refer to the back page of this publication.

The number of trade unions with fewer than 100 members decreased from 35 in June 1991 to 32 in June 1992.

There are now 8 unions with membership of 100,000 and over compared to 7 in each of the previous 4 years. These 8 unions account for 34 per cent of total union membership. Another 7 unions each has more than 80,000 members but fewer than 100,000. These 15 unions in total have 55 per cent of union membership.

The number of financial members reported by trade unions, as a proportion of total employees, decreased from 50 per cent in 1991 to 47 per cent in 1992. For males, this proportion fell from 55 per cent to 51 per cent, while for females it fell from 44 per cent in 1991 to 43 per cent in 1992.

All States and Territories reported a decrease in financial membership at June 1992 compared to the previous year. Tasmania reported the smallest decrease (1.4%). In contrast, Victoria reported a decrease of 8.8 per cent in financial membership.

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#### NOTES

The trade union statistics are compiled from questionnaires completed by individual trade unions. Accordingly, persons who are members of more than one trade union are counted more than once.

The statistics relate to trade union membership and State of operation of unions. Membership is that reported by the unions, and may include persons who do not consider themselves as members (eg. unfinancial, honorary, suspended).

Explanatory notes are published on pages 6 and 7 of this publication.

**RICHARD MADDEN**  
Acting Australian Statistician

TABLE 1. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF SEPARATE UNIONS

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Aust.(a)</i>
30 June									
1987	178	166	137	137	140	130	75	78	316
1988	170	166	130	136	139	120	73	74	308
1989	169	160	129	135	134	125	71	73	299
1990	163	157	126	131	134	121	57	62	295
1991	150	146	115	121	118	110	55	58	275
1992	124	114	94	95	95	91	46	54	227

(a) Australian totals do not equal the sum of the States and Territories. See paragraph 3 of the Explanatory Notes.

TABLE 2. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF MEMBERS ('000)

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Aust.</i>
MALES									
30 June									
1987—Financial	673.6	515.8	260.5	166.2	152.1	61.9	11.6	38.7	1,880.5
Total	772.2	578.4	305.2	184.3	170.8	67.1	13.6	44.4	2,136.0
1988—Financial	675.1	520.2	266.2	165.4	155.1	56.7	10.1	35.9	1,884.6
Total	795.3	589.6	303.1	183.9	178.5	62.5	11.7	42.2	2,166.6
1989—Financial	652.8	523.3	255.1	165.5	157.4	56.3	9.4	31.4	1,851.2
Total	807.6	598.9	300.0	187.3	181.9	63.0	11.6	40.6	2,191.0
1990—Financial	664.7	532.6	280.2	173.4	167.5	58.1	9.7	30.2	1,916.3
Total	812.9	598.5	311.8	189.4	193.6	62.4	10.6	37.9	2,217.1
1991—Financial	643.6	502.1	257.7	169.8	165.9	53.4	9.4	30.0	1,831.8
Total	762.5	573.5	300.5	186.8	186.9	59.3	11.7	34.3	2,115.5
1992—Financial	573.4	464.1	239.5	157.4	160.3	51.5	8.2	27.7	1,682.1
Total	683.9	522.0	279.9	176.8	178.6	57.2	9.9	31.1	1,939.4
FEMALES									
30 June									
1987—Financial	400.4	279.1	139.0	82.1	76.3	28.9	5.9	16.9	1,028.7
Total	433.5	297.3	151.1	86.6	80.9	29.4	6.6	18.8	1,104.2
1988—Financial	383.9	289.3	132.5	90.9	83.7	31.3	7.0	19.2	1,037.6
Total	423.1	311.9	144.1	95.3	89.6	31.6	7.6	20.8	1,123.8
1989—Financial	430.9	310.2	145.2	103.4	86.9	32.1	7.1	21.6	1,137.2
Total	461.5	332.3	158.0	110.6	92.5	34.0	7.7	22.7	1,219.3
1990—Financial	406.3	307.4	155.2	112.1	94.5	33.1	7.4	20.7	1,136.7
Total	450.5	316.7	161.3	114.8	98.3	33.3	7.9	22.3	1,205.2
1991—Financial	423.9	325.7	171.0	114.2	96.6	35.3	7.9	21.6	1,196.2
Total	454.6	338.5	183.8	119.2	103.0	36.3	8.8	22.8	1,267.0
1992—Financial	411.7	291.0	162.5	114.6	96.2	35.9	7.2	21.5	1,140.5
Total	428.4	305.0	175.2	120.4	99.1	36.9	7.9	22.7	1,195.7
PERSONS									
30 June									
1987—Financial	1,074.0	794.9	399.6	248.4	228.3	90.8	17.5	55.6	2,909.2
Total	1,205.8	875.7	456.3	270.9	251.7	96.5	20.2	63.1	3,240.1
1988—Financial	1,059.0	809.5	398.7	256.3	238.8	88.0	17.0	55.1	2,922.3
Total	1,218.3	901.5	447.1	279.2	268.0	94.1	19.3	63.0	3,290.5
1989—Financial	1,083.6	833.5	400.3	268.8	244.3	88.4	16.4	53.0	2,988.4
Total	1,269.0	931.2	458.0	297.9	274.4	97.1	19.3	63.4	3,410.3
1990—Financial	1,071.1	840.0	435.3	285.4	262.2	91.2	17.1	50.9	3,053.2
Total	1,263.5	915.2	473.1	304.3	291.9	95.7	18.4	60.2	3,422.2
1991—Financial	1,067.4	827.8	428.7	284.0	262.5	88.6	17.3	51.6	3,027.9
Total	1,217.1	912.0	484.3	306.0	289.9	95.6	20.5	57.1	3,382.6
1992—Financial	985.1	755.0	402.0	272.0	256.4	87.4	15.5	49.2	2,822.6
Total	1,112.3	827.0	455.2	297.2	277.7	94.1	17.8	53.7	3,135.1

TABLE 3. TRADE UNION MEMBERS : PROPORTION OF TOTAL EMPLOYEES  
(per cent)

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Aust.</i>
MALES									
30 June									
1987—Financial	58	56	52	60	49	67	31	60	55
Total	66	63	61	66	55	73	36	69	63
1988—Financial	54	55	52	57	50	63	32	55	54
Total	64	63	59	63	57	69	38	64	62
1989—Financial	53	54	45	56	52	62	27	49	52
Total	66	62	53	63	60	69	34	63	62
1990—Financial	54	55	50	58	55	63	26	48	54
Total	66	62	55	63	64	68	28	60	62
1991—Financial	56	57	49	59	56	63	23	45	55
Total	66	65	58	64	63	70	28	52	63
1992—Financial	51	54	45	57	51	62	25	40	51
Total	60	60	53	64	57	69	31	45	59
FEMALES									
30 June									
1987—Financial	47	39	40	39	33	43	24	29	41
Total	51	42	44	41	35	44	27	32	44
1988—Financial	42	39	37	42	36	47	28	31	40
Total	46	43	40	45	38	47	30	34	43
1989—Financial	46	40	35	45	36	48	26	36	41
Total	49	43	39	48	39	51	28	38	44
1990—Financial	42	40	37	48	39	47	25	33	40
Total	46	41	38	49	41	48	26	37	43
1991—Financial	46	44	42	48	40	54	27	35	44
Total	49	46	45	50	42	56	31	37	47
1992—Financial	45	41	38	52	40	54	31	32	43
Total	47	43	41	55	42	55	34	34	45
PERSONS									
30 June									
1987—Financial	53	49	47	50	42	57	29	45	49
Total	59	54	54	55	46	61	33	51	55
1988—Financial	49	48	46	51	44	56	30	43	48
Total	57	54	51	55	49	60	34	50	54
1989—Financial	50	48	41	51	45	56	27	43	47
Total	58	54	47	57	50	62	31	51	54
1990—Financial	49	48	44	54	48	56	25	41	48
Total	57	53	48	57	53	59	27	48	54
1991—Financial	51	51	46	54	49	59	24	40	50
Total	58	56	52	58	54	64	29	45	56
1992—Financial	48	48	42	55	47	59	28	36	47
Total	54	52	48	60	50	63	32	39	53



TABLE 4. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF STATES AND/OR TERRITORIES OF OPERATION, AUSTRALIA

	<i>One</i>	<i>Two</i>	<i>Three</i>	<i>Four</i>	<i>Five</i>	<i>Six or more</i>	<i>Total all States</i>
NUMBER OF SEPARATE UNIONS							
30 June							
1987	180	9	5	12	13	97	316
1988	177	6	4	12	16	93	308
1989	168	6	6	10	15	94	299
1990	168	5	5	12	16	89	295
1991	156	9	3	16	12	79	275
1992	134	5	3	9	13	63	227
NUMBER OF MEMBERS ('000)							
30 June							
1987	586.4	23.4	62.2	93.4	185.4	2,289.5	3,240.1
1988	575.3	18.3	54.8	109.3	218.6	2,314.1	3,290.5
1989	531.4	18.9	55.9	111.7	186.6	2,505.7	3,410.3
1990	545.3	18.2	46.3	133.9	127.4	2,551.1	3,422.2
1991	578.6	22.9	4.6	140.5	132.2	2,503.9	3,382.6
1992	466.1	13.6	4.4	68.1	135.0	2,447.9	3,135.1

TABLE 5. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF UNIONS ACCORDING TO SIZE OF UNION, AUSTRALIA

<i>Size of Union (number of members)</i>	<i>Number of unions</i>				<i>30 June 1992</i>		
	<i>30 June 1988</i>	<i>30 June 1989</i>	<i>30 June 1990</i>	<i>30 June 1991</i>	<i>Number of unions</i>	<i>Per cent total unions</i>	<i>Cumulative per cent of total unions</i>
Under 100	37	38	40	35	32	14.1	14.1
100 and under 250	32	31	34	34	26	11.5	25.6
250 and under 500	31	26	18	17	18	7.9	33.5
500 and under 1,000	43	41	44	38	28	12.3	45.8
1,000 and under 2,000	45	42	34	31	21	9.3	55.1
2,000 and under 3,000	11	12	18	13	14	6.2	61.2
3,000 and under 5,000	27	25	23	24	16	7.0	68.3
5,000 and under 10,000	18	19	21	18	19	8.4	76.7
10,000 and under 20,000	19	19	18	21	15	6.6	83.3
20,000 and under 30,000	11	12	11	11	7	3.1	86.3
30,000 and under 40,000	8	10	11	8	6	2.6	89.0
40,000 and under 50,000	8	6	5	6	5	2.2	91.2
50,000 and under 80,000	8	7	6	5	5	2.2	93.4
80,000 and under 100,000	3	4	5	7	7	3.1	96.5
100,000 and over	7	7	7	7	8	3.5	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

TABLE 6. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF MEMBERS ACCORDING TO SIZE OF UNION, AUSTRALIA

<i>Size of Union (number of members)</i>	<i>Number of members ('000)</i>					<i>30 June 1992</i>		
	<i>30 June 1988</i>	<i>30 June 1989</i>	<i>30 June 1990</i>	<i>30 June 1991</i>	<i>30 June 1992</i>	<i>Average number of members per union</i>	<i>Per cent of total members</i>	<i>Cumulative per cent of total members</i>
Under 100	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.3	42	—	—
100 and under 250	5.3	5.3	5.8	5.5	4.1	158	0.1	0.2
250 and under 500	11.4	8.9	6.1	5.7	6.2	343	0.2	0.4
500 and under 1,000	30.6	28.8	31.3	26.2	19.8	707	0.6	1.0
1,000 and under 2,000	65.2	59.5	46.8	41.6	26.6	1,265	0.8	1.9
2,000 and under 3,000	27.8	29.6	42.1	31.8	35.2	2,517	1.1	3.0
3,000 and under 5,000	107.1	98.8	93.4	92.7	60.2	3,764	1.9	4.9
5,000 and under 10,000	131.6	138.9	152.3	124.5	123.9	6,522	4.0	8.8
10,000 and under 20,000	268.5	261.3	265.9	293.3	212.2	14,144	6.8	15.6
20,000 and under 30,000	261.1	295.4	276.3	278.1	170.9	24,409	5.5	21.1
30,000 and under 40,000	277.1	350.2	377.8	264.1	210.5	35,088	6.7	27.8
40,000 and under 50,000	353.9	271.1	227.7	268.2	220.2	44,049	7.0	34.8
50,000 and under 80,000	499.9	453.1	407.9	333.4	331.1	66,215	10.6	45.4
80,000 and under 100,000	258.9	365.0	454.6	627.5	633.7	90,525	20.2	65.6
100,000 and over	990.4	1,042.9	1,032.5	988.6	1,079.2	134,894	34.4	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,290.5</b>	<b>3,410.3</b>	<b>3,422.2</b>	<b>3,382.6</b>	<b>3,135.1</b>	<b>13,811</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

### Introduction

The statistics in this publication have been compiled from questionnaires completed by individual trade unions in respect of their membership and State of operation as at 30 June 1992. The collection was changed to an end of June basis in 1985. Figures for previous years were collected as at 31 December.

### Scope and coverage

2. Current lists of trade unions are maintained by reference to the following sources:

- trade unions registered under the provisions of the various Federal and State industrial arbitration Acts, trade union Acts, etc.
- unions reported to be engaged in conciliation and arbitration proceedings.
- reports in trade journals, trade union and employer periodicals, newspapers and other publications.

It should be noted that not all reporting trade unions are registered under industrial arbitration legislation or State trade union Acts.

3. To reduce the possibility of duplication of the number of unions and members in these statistics, where a trade union is a branch of a larger trade union, only the larger organisation is counted. An interstate or federated trade union (i.e. a union with members in more than one State or Territory) is treated as a separate union in each State or Territory in which it has members, but is counted only once in the Australian total. Unions with interstate associations which are not strictly branches of a common organisation are counted as separate unions in the totals for Australia.

4. The published number of trade unions varies from year to year as a result of amalgamations of unions, deregistration of unions, unions ceasing to operate, new unions being formed, existing organisations changing their status such that it brings them within the scope of the definition of a trade union (see paragraph 5), and unions reporting for the first time.

### Definitions

5. For the purpose of these statistics a *trade union* is defined as an organisation, consisting predominantly of employees, the principal activities of which include the negotiation of rates of pay and conditions of employment for its members. Non-operating unions or branches, i.e. those with no members at the date of collection, are not included in the statistics.

6. *Membership of trade unions.* Financial members are dues paying members no more than 6 months in arrears. The total number of members includes all persons (finan-

cial, unfinancial, honorary, suspended, junior, etc.) regarded by unions as members.

7. Persons who are members of more than one union cannot be separately identified and are therefore counted more than once in the totals. The extent of this duplication is not known. Members of unions who work overseas are excluded from the reported membership data. Membership figures may be affected by differences in the concept of membership adopted by different unions or by the same union at different times (see paragraph 9 below).

8. *Proportion of total employees.* The approximate percentages of wage and salary earners in employment (i.e. employees) who were members of trade unions are shown in Table 3. From 30 June 1985, the proportions of employees have been calculated using estimates of employees from the ABS Survey of Employment and Earnings (*Employed Wage and Salary Earners (6248.0)*). These estimates have been adjusted by adding Labour Force Survey estimates of employees in Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting and in Private households employing staff (*Labour Force, Australia (6203.0)*). Prior to 30 June 1985, estimates of employees were taken from the Labour Force Survey only. The percentages shown should be regarded as giving only a broad indication of the extent of union membership among employees because they are based on estimates of employed wage and salary earners; the number of union members who were not employed (i.e. were unemployed, retired, etc.) will affect the percentages for a particular year and comparisons over time.

### Comparability of series

9. Comparability of figures for different years may be affected by a number of factors. As stated in paragraph 7, there may be duplication in the count of members. This duplication may vary over time. Union rules on membership may follow different concepts and practices and this may be reflected in the level and fluctuations of the figures reported. Unions reported financial and total membership separately for the first time as at 30 June 1985. In previous years some unions confined their reported membership to 'financial' members whilst others included various other members. Individual unions may or may not include in their reported membership unemployed members, members who have retired from the labour force, disabled members, members with dues in arrears (who may be kept on union books for varying lengths of time), etc.

10. Membership of trade unions is shown separately for males and females for each State and Territory. The subdivision of total membership into males and females is not precise because some trade unions are unable to state the exact number of male and female members. The subdivision of total membership by States and Territories is also not precise because some unions in the Territories are affiliated with State organisations and their membership is reported under the heading of that State. In particular,



some unions in the Northern Territory are affiliated with unions registered in Queensland or in South Australia.

#### Organisations registered under industrial arbitration legislation

11. Details of employee organisations registered under the *Federal Industrial Relations Act 1988* as at 30 June 1992, and comparisons for 1991, are as follows:

	1992	1991
Employee unions	94	125
Membership	2,611,700	2,778,985

1992 membership figures reflect 83% of total reported trade union membership.

12. Industrial legislation in most States also provides for the registration of employee associations. Some employee associations are registered under more than one Act but these are counted only once in these statistics.

#### Comparison with Trade Union Members, Australia (6325.0)

13. Statistics on trade union membership obtained from a supplementary survey to the labour force survey are published biennially in *Trade Union Members, Australia* (6325.0). The estimates in that publication are lower than those obtained from this census for a number of reasons, including the following:

- (i) estimates in the *Trade Union Members* publication relate only to trade union membership in the respondent's main job; a person who was a member of a trade union only by virtue of holding a second job was excluded;
- (ii) they relate only to trade union membership in one job, whereas a person who had recently changed jobs could be registered as a member of more than one union in the Trade Union Census;
- (iii) the estimates relate only to persons who were employees in their main job in the reference week: other persons (e.g. unemployed and those not in the labour force) are excluded even though they may have retained union membership in respect of some earlier employment;
- (iv) some persons may elect to belong to more than one union, but would be counted only once in the supplementary survey;
- (v) some unions may encounter difficulties in maintaining up-to-date registers of members. Numbers reported in the Trade Union Census may therefore include persons who are no longer members.

#### Related publications

14. Users may also wish to refer to the following publications:

*Industrial Disputes, Australia* (6322.0) — issued annually

*Industrial Disputes, Australia* (6321.0) — issued monthly

*Labour Statistics, Australia* (6101.0) — issued annually

*The Labour Force, Australia, Preliminary* (6202.0) — issued monthly

*The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0) — issued monthly

*Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Australia* (6248.0) — issued quarterly

*Trade Union Members, Australia, August 1992* (6325.0)

*Award Rates of Pay Indexes, Australia* (6312.0) — issued monthly

*Award Coverage, Australia, May 1990* (6315.0)

#### Unpublished statistics

15. In some cases, the ABS can also make available information which is not published. This information may be made available in one or more of the following forms: microfiche, photocopy, data tape, computer printout, clerically-extracted tabulation. Generally, a charge is made for providing unpublished information. Inquiries regarding data availability and associated charges should be directed to Brenda McMorrow on (06) 252 6561, or to Information Services in the nearest ABS office.

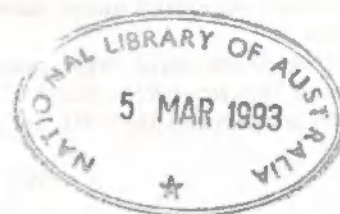
16. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS office.

#### Symbols and other usages

— nil or rounded to zero

17. Where estimates have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

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